

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR., Wisconsin  
CHAIRMAN

HENRY J. HYDE, Illinois  
HOWARD COBLE, North Carolina  
LAMAR S. SMITH, Texas  
ELTON GALLEGLY, California  
BOB GOODLATTE, Virginia  
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio  
WILLIAM L. JENKINS, Tennessee  
CHRIS CANNON, Utah  
SPENCER BACHUS, Alabama  
JOHN N. HOSTETTLER, Indiana  
MARK GREEN, Wisconsin  
RICK KELLER, Florida  
MELISSA A. HART, Pennsylvania  
JEFF FLAKE, Arizona  
MIKE PENCE, Indiana  
J. RANDY FORBES, Virginia  
STEVE KING, Iowa  
JOHN R. CARTER, Texas  
TOM FEENEY, Florida  
MARSHA BLACKBURN, Tennessee

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

### COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-3951

<http://www.house.gov/judiciary>

JOHN CONYERS, JR., Michigan  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

HOWARD L. BERMAN, California  
RICK BOUCHER, Virginia  
JERROLD NADLER, New York  
ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT, Virginia  
MELVIN L. WATT, North Carolina  
ZOE LOFGREN, California  
SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Texas  
MAXINE WATERS, California  
MARTIN T. MEEHAN, Massachusetts  
WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT, Massachusetts  
ROBERT WEXLER, Florida  
TAMMY BALDWIN, Wisconsin  
ANTHONY D. WEINER, New York  
ADAM B. SCHIFF, California  
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, California

October 7, 2003

The Honorable Karl Rove  
Senior Advisor to the President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Rove:

I write to ask you to resign from the White House staff. Recent press reports have indicated that, while you may or may not have been the source of the Robert Novak column which revealed the status and name of a covert operative, the wife of Ambassador Joseph Wilson, you were involved in a subsequent effort to push this classified information to other reporters and give it even wider currency. This itself may be a federal crime, but regardless of that fact, your actions are morally indefensible. In my view, it is shameful and unethical that an Administration that promised to govern with "honor and integrity" and "change the tone" in Washington has now engaged in an orchestrated campaign to smear and intimidate truth-telling critics, placing them in possible physical harm and impairing the efforts and operations of the CIA.

Recent reports indicate that you told the journalist, Chris Matthews, and perhaps others, that Mr. Wilson's wife and her undercover status were "fair game." Evan Thomas and Michael Isikoff, *Newsweek*, Oct. 13, 2003. Since these initial allegations have arisen, neither the White House nor your office have denied your involvement in furthering the leak. Repeated press inquiries into this matter have been rebuffed with technical jargon and narrow legalisms, instead of broader ethical issues. Indeed, in the same article it appears a White House source acknowledged that you contacted Matthews and other journalists, indicating that "it was reasonable to discuss who sent Wilson to Niger."

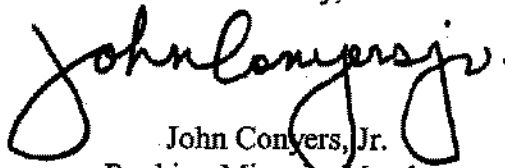
It should be noted that these actions may well have violated 18 U.S.C. § 793, which prohibits the willful or grossly negligent distribution of national defense information that could possibly be used against the United States. The law states that even if you lawfully knew of

The Honorable Karl Rove  
Page 2  
October 7, 2003

Mr. Wilson's wife's status, you were obliged to come forward and report the press leak to the proper authorities – not inflame the situation by encouraging further dissemination. 18 U.S.C. § 793(f). Larger than whether any one statute can be read to find criminal responsibility is the issue of whether officials of your stature will be allowed to use their influence to intimidate whistle-blowers.

Over three decades ago, our nation was scarred by an Administration that would stop at nothing to smear and intimidate its critics. I do not believe the Nation will countenance a repeat of such activities. For your role in this campaign, I would ask that you resign immediately.

Sincerely,



John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Minority Member

cc: The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary.